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Message Text

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45
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 A-01 SY-05 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02 IO-13

SAJ-01 ACDA-07 AID-05 SCCT-01 /104 W
---------- 030335
O P 281231Z AUG 76
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1624
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 76
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
CIA WASHDC
COMSIXTHFLT
COMPHIBRON FOUR
COM THREE TWO MAU
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 7146

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION AUG 28

REF: BEIRUT 7125

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1. SUMMARY: AL AND RIGHTISTS MEET TO DISCUSS PEACE PLAN,

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WILL MEET AGAIN SEPT 1, RIGHTIST ATTITUDE WILL DEPEND IN
PART ON SYRIAN REACTION, WHICH STILL AWAITED. JUNBLATT
REAFFIRMS POSITIONS ON KEY ISSUES BUT NOTABLY DOES NOT SPEAK
OF DEFENDING HIGH METN. ARAFAT BARELY MISSES MEETING U.S.
CHARGE. LEADING BEIRUT INDEPENDENT DAILY AN-NAHAR MAY BE IN
TROUBLE WITH PLO; NOT DISTRIBUTED AUG 28. ATTEMPT TO
TRANSFER FUNDS FROM CENTRAL BANK TO JOUNIEH FOILED BY
MURABITOUN, WHO INSIST TRIPOLI NEEDS SOME CASH TOO.
MILITARY ACTIVITY CONTINUES AT LOW LEVEL. IN BEIRUT, FIRE
FIGHTS ALONG CONFRONTATION LINE. AT TRIPOLI, HEAVY ARTILLERY
BUT NO SHIFT IN LINES. SYRIAN REINFORCEMENTS REPORTED IN
CENTRAL MOUNTAINS. SYRIANS OCCUPY MORE VILLAGES IN BEKAA,
AND SURROUND VILLAGES IN SOUTH NEAR MARJAYOUN. END SUMMARY.

2. ARAB LEAGUE ACTIVITIES. MEETING OF ARAB LEAGUE
POLITICAL AND MILITARY REPS AND KFOUR FRONT LEADERS
TOOK PLACE AT 1100 LOCAL AUG 27 AS PLANNED. BOTH
PIERRE GEMAYEL AND CAMILLE CHAMOUN ATTENDED AS WELL AS
HOST OF LESSER KFOUR LIGHTS, BUT GUARDIANS OF THE CEDAR
NOT REPRESENTED. KFOUR ASKED FOR TIME TO STUDY PLAN
"PRESENTED BY ARAB LEAGUE" (ALTHOUGH PHALANGE HAS BEEN
ACTIVELY INVOLVED OVER LAST TWO WEEKS IN DEVELOPING PLAN
TOGETHER WITH PLO AND AL). IN LIGHT OF DTOHFUZAL-MUHARRIR
INTERPRETS MEETING AS FAILURE. MOST PROBABLY, KFOUR
LEADERS DO NEED ADDITIONAL, TIME TO STUDY PLAN, AND TO
OBTAIN SYRIAN REACTION. PHALANGE POLITICAL BUREAU CHIEF
PAKRADOUNI REPORTEDLY DEPARTED FOR DAMASCUS AUG 27, AFTER
BUREAU MEETING PRESIDED BY GEMAYEL. CHAMOUN SPOKE OF KFOUR
"COUNTER PROPOSITIONS" TO BE PRESENTED AT NEXT MEETING
SPET 1. ON CONTENT OF PLAN, AS IT NOW STANDS, RIGHTIST
RADIO SAYS THAT AL WOULD ESTABLISH TWO OBSERVATION POSTS
IN METN, AT JISR-BZEBDINE AND DHOUR-HZERTA. RIGHTIST
RADIO CLAIMS WITHDRAWAL OF PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST FORCES FROM
BEIRUT (SIC) AND MAMMANA WILL BE STUDIED WITHIN TWO WEEKS.
WE HAOE NO INFORMATION TO CONFIRM THESE DETAILS. AL DEPUTY
KHOLI AND MILITARY COMMANDER GHONEIM EXPECTED TO MEET AUG 28
WITH PALESTINIAN AND LEFTIST LEADERS TO DISCUSS PLAN. KHOLI
ALSO REPORTED AS ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE MEETING OF JUNBLATT
WITH KARAME AND SALAM. PRESIDENT FRANGIE HAS PROPOSED THAT
AL SUMMIT MEETING BE HELD AT TABARJA BEACH (JUST NORTH OF CASINO).
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3. LEBANESE LEFT. JUNBLATT PRESS CONFERENCE AUG 27
PRODUCED NO SURPRISES. JUNBLATT DEMANDS SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL
AS "KEY TO THE SOLUTION," REINFORCEMENT OF IRERCES, RETURN
TO CAIRO ACCORDS ON PALESTINIAN STATUS "WHILE SAFEGUARDING
THE SUPERIOR INTERESTS OF LEBANON AND OF THE PALESTINIAN
REVOLUTION," AND A LEBANESE-LEBANESE DIALOGUE "UNDER THE
AUSPICES OF THE ARAB LEAGUE ." JUNBLATT SPOKE OF NEED FOR

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LEBANESE REFORMS. HE SAID NATIONAL MOVEMENT AWAITS NOTE
FROM ISLAMIC GROUP AND NATIONAL UNITY FRONT, SIGNED BY
PRIMIN KARAME, DEMANDING SYRIAN TROOP WITHDRAWAL. NOTABLY
ABSENT WAS ANY JUNBLATT STATEMENT OF DETERMINATION TO KEEP
POSITIONS IN HIGH METN. NM CONTINUES OPPOSITION TO
REPRESENTATION OF PRO-SYRIAN LEFTISTS IN CEASEFIRE
COMMITTEE. JUNBLATT ALSO VISITED SOVIET AMBASSADOR
SOLDATOV AND GAVE HIM MESSAGE FOR SOVIET LEADERS FROM NM.
AL-MUHARRIR SAYS MESSAGE ASKS FOR SOVIET PRESSURE ON SYRIA
TO WITHDRAW AND FOR MORE DIRECT SOVIET ASSISTANCE.

4. ARAFAT GOES CALLING. YASSIR ARAFAT, WHOSE PRACTICE
IS TO HAVE HIS AIDES ADVISE PEOPLE HE IS VISITING ONLY
AFTER HE IS ON THE WAY, NARROWLY MISSED ENCOUNTERING U.S.
CHARGE AND DCM AT HOME OF RAYMOND EDDE AT ABOUT 1130 LOCAL
AUG 27. ARAFAT TOLD HIS DRIVER TO GO ON AFTER SPOTTING
U.S. EMBASSY VEHICLE, RETURNED TO SEE EDDE TWO HOURS LATER.
MOST BEIRUT NEWSPAPERS AUG 28 CARRY STORY, JUXTAPOSING
PHOTO OF EDDE WITH US DIPLOMATS WITH PHOTO OF EDDE WITH ARAFAT.

5. OTHER POLITICAL NOTES. SOVIET AMB PAID CALL ON KARAME
AND LATER AFFIRMED SOVIET SUPPORT OF LEBANESE
SOVEREIGNTY, INTEGRITY AND INDEPENDENCE. L'ORIENT SAYS
POSSIBILITY STILL REMAINS THAT FRANGIE WILL DEPOSE KARAME
BEFORE END OF HIS TERM. PIERRE GEMAYEL SPEAKS OF
RECONSTRUCTION PLANS ALREADY BEING MADE FOR A "NEW
LEBANON," AND ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF PHALANGE-
NATIONAL LIBERAL "COMMITTEE FOR PLANIFICATION."
FRANGIE MET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF "KESROUAN ORGANIZATION"
TO DISCUSS PORT AND BANKS OF JOUNIEH.

6. AN-NAHAR IN TROUBLE? ABOU-JAOUDE, EDITOR OF LEADING
INDEPENDENT BEIRUT DAILY, AN-NAHAR, HELD PRESS CONFERENCE
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AUG 27 ON HIS DIFFICULTIES WITH PLO OVER RECENT MONTHS.
AS-SAFIR SAYS JAOUDE DEMANDED EXPLANATIONS FROM WAFA AND
ABU IYAD AS TO WHY THEY HAVE ATTACKED PAPER IN PAST, OR ELSE
HE WOULD MAKE SOME REVELATIONS HIMSELF ON AUG 30. AN-NAHAR
DID NOT APPEAR ON THE STREETS AUG 28, BUT WE UNDERSTAND
THAT IT WAS PUBLISHED AND THAT IT WILL APPEAR AUG 29.

7. LIQUIDITY PROBLEMS EAST AND WEST. CENTRAL BANK, UNDER
ARAB LEAGUE PROTECTION, ATTEMPTED TRANSPORT QUANTITY OF
MONEY ACROSS CONFRONTATION LINE AUG 27 BUT WAS STOPPED BY
MURABITOUN. SAMIR SABBAGH CONTACTED PRIMIN KARAME, WHO
CONFIRMED THAT MONEY DESTINEDLFOR JOUNIEH. SABBAGH
OBJECTED THAT NON-CHRISTIAN AREAS, NOTABLY TRIPOLI, ALSO
SUFFERING FROM LACK OF CASH. KARAME SAID AL CURRENTLY
ENGAGED IN EFFORT TO MOVE MONEY TO TRIPOLI AS WELL.

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MURABITOUN ESCORTED CONVOY BACK TO THE BANK. PAPERS SAY
150 MILLION LEBANESE POUNDS INVOLVED, BUT RADIO EARLY
AUG 28 ALLUDES TO 15 MILLION, WHICH SEEMS MORE PLAUSIBLE.

8. GROUND SITUATION. BEIRUT AREA. PATTERN OF INTENSE
FIRE FIGHTS AT NIGHT COPTINUES ALONG CONFRONTATION LINE,
ESPECIALLY AROUND GALERIE SEMAAN. RIGHTISTS CLAIM
REPELLED PALESTINIAN/LEFTIST RAID IN AREA OF TAYYOUNE.
INDISCRIMINATE ARTILLERY FIRING GENERALLY STOPPED, BUT
ROUNDS DID FALL IN ASHRAFIEH IN EAST AND IN AIN MEREISSE
IN WEST. WE ARE TOLD THAT MOST SHIITES LIVING NEAR
CONFRONTATION LINES IN WEST BEIRUT HAVE NOW DEPARTED FOR
THEIR VILLAGES IN SOUTH, BUT SHIITES NOW BEGINNING TO
RETURN TO NABAA IN EAST BEIRUT. LEBANESE ARMY G-2
AGENT NOW INSISTS MORE THAN 3000 IRAQIS IN LEBANON.
POSSIBLE SOURCE OF DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THIS NUMBER AND
PREVIOUS ESTIMATES (1200) IS THAT NUMBER OF "IRAQIS" ARE
IN FACT PALESTINIANS FROM IRAQ, EASILY ASSIMILATED TO
FEDAYEEN GROUPS IN LEBANON.

9. REST OF LEBANON. IN NORTH, AS-SAFIR AND L'ORIENT
REPORT HEAVY FIGHTING AROUND TRIPOLI, BUT NO GROUND SHIFTS.
L'ORIENT SPECULATES CHRISTIANS ATTEMPTING CAMPAIGN OF
ATTRITION AGAINST CITY. IT LIKELY THAT SYRIANS ARE
RESTRAINING CHRISTIANS AS WELL, EITHER BECAUSE THEY MAY
WANT TO ARRANGE CEASEFIRE, OR BECAUSE THEY HAVE DESIGNS ON
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TRIPOLI THEMSELVES. IN HIGH METN, CONTINUED HEAVY
ARTILLERY. UNCONFIRMED REPORT OF SYRIAN REINFORCEMENTS
IN AREA. IN BEKAA,AMCHITE RADIO SAYS SYRIANS HAOE
OCCUPIED VILLAGE OF KAB ELIAS AND ARRESTED SOME TEN
LEFTISTS, AND PHALANGIST RADIO SAYS SYRIANS SEARCHED
VILLAGE OF SAADNAYEL, NEAR ZAHLE, AFTER SYRIAN TRUCK
DYNAMITED. IN SOUTH, SYRIANS RELIABLY REPORTED AS HAVING
SURROUNDEDLSHIITE VILLAGES OF SUHMUR AND YUHMUR, JUST SOUTH
OF LAKE QARAUN, AND ARRESTING ALF AND COMMUNIST ADHERENTS.
SYRIANS MAY WISH TO CLEAR SOUTHERN APPROACHES TO MARJAYOUN.
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